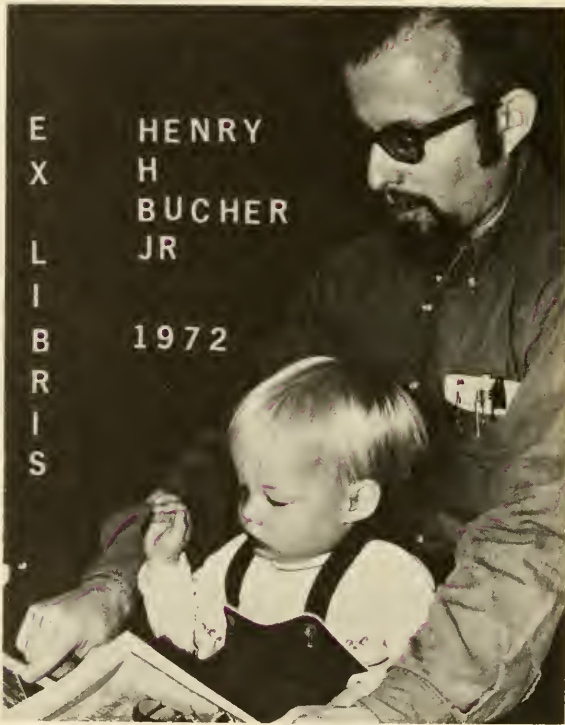


Henry & Emily Bucher
Route #1
Black Earth, Wisc. 53515

Henry Bucher











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Bucher
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H. BOCHER
B. P. 80
LIBREVILLE
CABON

BATANGA TALES.

BY R. H. NASSAU.

Written in Amble, Penna



BATANGA TALES.¹

BY R. H. NASSAU.

THE special region from which these observations are derived is the equatorial portion of West Africa, more locally a tract three hundred miles square, the field of work on which I was engaged in the service of the Presbyterian church (north), its only mission on the entire African Continent.

Beginning near the line of the equator, my travels extended a hundred miles south of it, to and below Cape Lopez. In this district were many small streams entering the South Atlantic, and two large ones, — the Gabun² and the Ogowe.³ The latter enters the ocean by four mouths, — to the northward, the Nazareth, into Nazareth Bay; Ogowe proper, at Cape Lopez; and, south of that cape, the Mexias and the Fernan Vaz. The first two enclose a delta, whose apex is a hundred and thirty miles up the course of the river.

Exactly one degree north of the equator is the island of Corisco, a microcosm of five miles in length by three miles in width, with perfect little imitations of hills, prairies, lakes, and rivers. It stands almost in the centre of Corisco Bay, from fifteen to twenty miles distant from the shore-line. Into the bay empty two rivers of good size, — the Muni⁴ and the Munda.

Fifty miles north of Corisco (on the way passing some smaller streams) there is the large river Eyo (native) or Bonito (Spanish). Forty miles farther north is the Campo; forty more, the Lobi; five more, the Kribi; and eighty more, the Camaraoñ (Portuguese) or Kamerun (German). Between the Ogowe and the Kamerun there is a coast-line of four hundred miles. That quadrangle of four hundred miles square is inhabited by scores of tribes, whose languages are dialectic varieties of the Bantu.

I. THE FAVORED DAUGHTER.⁵

(*Mpongwe.*)

Ra-Mborakinda lived in his town with his women and sons, and daughters and servants. Among his women were Ngwekonde (his

¹ This collection of tales shows, even more markedly than that of E. Chatelain, the influence of Portuguese.

² Makwëngě.

³ Variouslly spelled Ogobai and Ogooue.

⁴ Rio d' Angra ("River Danger") of commerce.

⁵ For comparative notes see Johannes Bolte und Georg Polívka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm*, 1913, p. 461.

chief wife) and Ngwe-lëgë, whom he neglected. But the latter had a beautiful daughter named Ilâmbe, much beloved by him. Ra-Mborakinda prized this daughter so much, that he left everything to her direction.

One day he wished to start on a journey, intending to stay a long time. He had, in his anxiety for her safety, a rule that she should not go out of her house to walk far, lest she get into trouble. When he was arranging to go, he gave all the keys and directions of everything into her hands. He said to her, "As I shall be away a long time, I leave all cloth and other goods for you to give out as you may see the people need." Ilâmbe consented to do this work, and Ra-Mborakinda went away. After he had been away for quite a while, and she thought it time to give out cloth and whatever was required for the women, she was very careful not to show partiality to her friends, not even to give more to her mother. So, if she gave, for instance, two cloths to her mother, she would give as many as five to Ngwekonde, and to all the others what she thought they needed. Yet Ngwekonde was not satisfied; even though she had been given more than others, her heart was planning mischief to Ilâmbe. So Ngwekonde made up her mind, "I will know what I shall do some day;" for she was jealous that the petted daughter had been put into authority over her.

One day the people saw Ilâmbe walking on the premises, and they remembered that she was going out of the bounds her father had assigned her. They called, "Ilâmbe, Ilâmbe! where are you going?" She replied, "I'm going for a walk." Soon they all seemed to forget to observe where she had gone; for Ngwekonde by her sorcery had caused Ilâmbe's head to be confused, and had made the people forget to watch her.

Soon after Ilâmbe had gone out of the town into the forest, Ngwekonde also followed to go after her, without the people seeing her go. Ilâmbe went aimlessly, with Ngwekonde behind her. Then, when they were far from the town, Ngwekonde said, "Yes, I've got you now! — you, with your pride because you are the beloved daughter! Do not think that you will again see your father and mother." So she seized and dragged Ilâmbe to the foot of a big tree, tied her to it, and began to give her a severe beating. Ilâmbe pleaded, and said, "Ah, Ngwekonde! Please, what have I done? In what have I wronged you?" But Ngwekonde replied only, "No mercy for you!" and then tied her hands fast to the tree. Then Ngwekonde returned to the town. Soon after Ngwekonde had gone, Ilâmbe longed to get back to the town, for she feared the forest. She began to try to loosen the knots. She tried and tried and tried, but the knots were hard.

Darkness came, and she was very much afraid. Finally, after long effort, she got the cords loosened; but she was weak, and faint with

hunger. She thought, "When I started on the walk, it was at random; and when I came to my senses, when Ngwekonde dragged me to the tree, I did not know in what direction we came; and now I do not know the direction back to the town." So she began to walk in any direction. As she went on and on, at last she happened into a path. She said to herself, "This path, even if it does not lead to my town, may lead me to where people are." She went on and on, and after a while, by daylight, saw that the view ahead opened. By that she knew that she was getting near to some clearing and perhaps to some village.

Following the path, she came straight to a hamlet; but she was afraid to enter it. She thought, "Perhaps the owners of this place may be enemies of my father; and they may beat me, just as did Ngwekonde. I must hide." So she remained for a while on the outskirts, and then slowly and gradually crept from tree to tree on one side of the path, lest some one should see her. When she was close to the hamlet, she peeped through the bushes to see whether she could recognize any one; for she feared strangers. She saw no one at all, and went on into the street, and entered a large house, and began to look around her. She saw no person, but only goods and food. After she had examined this large house, she went into a smaller one, which was the kitchen, where the cooking was done. She exclaimed to herself, "Ah! it is not very late, and I am very hungry. I will try to cook something. And I must be quick, lest the owners come and find me, and kill me." So she started to work. She took of different kinds of food, and dried fish, and firewood, and began rapidly to cook. After the pot had boiled, she took out a little of its contents, and began to eat hurriedly. As to the remainder of the food, she went to the larger house, and got clean dishes, put the food into them, and set them on the table. Then she went out of the hamlet and hid herself in the bushes near by. Soon after she had hidden herself there, the owners of the place came. They were carpenters. They entered their house, and behold! on the table, food that was still warm. They exclaimed, "Who has done us this good thing?"

They looked all through the house and into the kitchen, but no person was there. Then they looked outside, in the back-yard, and no person was there. They said, "Perhaps some other day we shall find out." So they went into the house, took their seats at the table, and began to eat. As they ate they shouted, "You who have done this, if you are a man or a woman, come out and show yourself!" But there was no reply. Ilâmbe had heard them, but remained quiet. So they said to themselves, "Never mind. To-morrow we will by artifice find out this person, whether it be a man or a woman. If it be a man, we will take him for a brother in our work. If it be a woman, then none of us shall marry her. She shall be our sister."

At night she did not enter the town, but remained hidden near. Next morning the carpenters said among themselves, "We go to our work; but one of us must return early, as if unexpectedly, and perhaps we can find out this person." And they went to their work; but one returned early.

In the interval, Ilâmbe was busy with her work of cooking. She made the food and put it on the table. As she was passing from house to house, the man who had been watching came softly behind her, and seized her. She began to scream, and beg, "Please, please, let me go!" He said, "Do not fear. You have done no wrong. Be quiet." Then he asked her questions, and she told her story. So Ilâmbe was quieted, and she completed the arranging of the food on the table. Not long after that, the other men came; and the first man told them of Ilâmbe. They said to her, "Remain quiet. You are our sister. You need not be afraid of any thing. We will take good care of you."

The next day, off at their place of work, they began to buy nice things for her. And they dressed her in fine clothes.

But they warned her, "One thing we must tell you. Be very careful. Sometimes there is a certain big bird which comes here and picks up people, and kills them. When it comes, people have to remain in their houses, and shut their doors and windows." They also told her that the usual time of the coming of the bird was at noon. On another day they went away to their work, as usual. When they returned, Ilâmbe made their food; and they went into the house to eat it.

And the bird came at an unusual hour, and it killed Ilâmbe. When the men came from the house where they had been eating, they found her dead. They mourned for her. When they had made a coffin, and placed her in it, they refrained from burying it; for the body looked so life-like, and did not decay. So they kept it suspended in the air, and daily they went to look at her face.

2. TWO FRIENDS: A STORY OF REVENGE.

(*Batanga.*)

Ugula, son of Njambu-ya-Manga, and Ugula, son of Njambu-Mepindi, were great friends. Ugula, son of Njambu-ya-Manga, said, "I am going to seek Ivenga in marriage." So he went in his canoe, and stopped at the landing-place of her father's town. Hearing of his coming, Ivenga dressed her maid-servant finely, saying, "You sit in the house, in the hall; you wait for him. I want to know whether he has come for marriage with myself."

When Ugula came up to the house, he found that servant-woman there. He at once sat down with her, and he and she agreed on a marriage that night.

Next day they had their food and play and every thing to please themselves, the woman forgetting that she was only a servant. When another day broke, he said, "Now for the journey!"

Ivenga came out of the house, and stood in the street to meet them. She called her servant, and said to her, "Do you assume this pride because of your marriage with Ugula?" Then she beat her.

Ugula, in astonishment, said, "Is it possible that it was a slave whom I married?" In his shame he took a pistol and shot its bullets into his body; and he died.

Thereupon Ugula-mwa-Mepindi said, "I am going now to avenge my friend;" and he started with his man-slave on a journey to Ivenga's town, as if to marry her. He dressed the slave in fine clothes, and he told him, "Even if you find a woman in the hall of the house, do not sit down, but pass her by, on to where Ivenga herself is."

So they arrived there, and the slave went up to the room where Ivenga was; and he and she at once made a marriage, she thinking he was Ugula.

Early next day the two men said, "Now for the journey!" The townspeople went with them to escort Ivenga to the boat-landing. There Ugula said to his slave, "Get into the boat!" And he beat him, and said, "You are made proud because you married Ivenga, eh?" He seized him in his fine clothes, and threw him, splash! into the water.

Ivenga, when she saw how it was, snatched up a gun, and firing it, bang, bang, into her body, fell down, saying, "Is it possible that it was a slave who married me!" Then she died.

Love for a friend lasts long. It took vengeance, as Ugula avenged his friend, playing on Ivenga the same trick she had played on the other Ugula.

3. JOHN-THE-WISE AND I-AM-JOHN.¹

Njambu-of-the-Sea lived by the seacoast, and he begat a man-child, by name John-the-Wise; and Njambu said, "Whoever else shall give that name to his child, it shall be killed." Thereafter any one so named was at once killed. Many were destroyed in that manner.

Also Njambu-of-the-Inland begat a child; and the child called himself a name, I-am-John. But his father spoke to him, saying, "That name is not to be named in this land." The son asked, "Why? Does a name belong to only one person?"

After that, this son went to the seacoast two or three journeys. Finally he remained there. And his namesake, John-the-Wise, put in his care a he-goat, on shares, as he said. Some time afterward John-the-Wise asked him, "Have the goats increased? Has the goat

¹ See Aurelio M. Espinosa, "Comparative Notes on Spanish Folk-Tales," notes on Pedro di Urdeemales (this Journal, vol. xxvii, p. 220); see also Reinhold Köhler, *Kleinere Schriften*, vol. i, pp. 91, 230.—ED.

given birth?" The other answered, "Yes, it has borne three times."¹ So John-the-Wise replied, "Can a male give birth to a child?"

Then I-am-John came and cut down a redwood-tree near to the house of his namesake, John-the-Wise, who asked him, "What are you cutting the redwood for?" I-am-John told him, "My father has just given birth."² John-the-Wise said, "What! can a man give birth?" The other one replied, "But you, you offered me a goat to raise a flock on shares, and you tried to deceive me by sending a male." Then John-the-Wise, in a rage, caused him to be tied that he might be carried and thrown into the sea.

He was put into a canoe, and was taken very far out to sea, to a certain island near White Man's Land, where the canoe stopped, and the crew scattered ashore to seek for food at a town near by; and they left I-am-John tied in the canoe. There he was moaning, "I did not wish to marry the daughter of a king;" that is, he had not been self-assuming in his difficulty with John-the-Wise.

A white man from the town on the island happened along, and he heard him crying out, "I do not wish to marry the child of a king." The white man, misunderstanding, thought that I-am-John was being tied and taken on this journey to compel him to marry some king's daughter. This the white man thought would be a fine thing for himself. So he said to I-am-John, "You're a fool! Let me embark. You get out." So the white man stepped into the canoe and untied I-am-John, who then, at his request, tied him, and then went out of the canoe.

When the crew returned, they found, instead of I-am-John, a white man tied, and groaning, "I want to marry the daughter of a king." The crew thought him crazy, and said, "Such a fool as this will rejoice to die." So they took him and cast him into the sea, and returned to their country. In the mean while, I-am-John, the son of Njambu-of-the-Inland, had gone up to the town, and after a time he married the woman whom the white man had deserted for "a king's daughter."

The woman made a feast and invited many, and said, "Since my white husband died, I have not married; but to-day I am married." And she and her husband remained there for a while. Then this John obtained great wealth and power. He ordered that a man-of-war should be gotten ready, and it was immediately prepared. He and his people sailed from the island back to the shore of the country of Njambu-of-the-Sea. They anchored there; and the sailors and soldiers landed, and went up to the town of John-the-Wise. They set it on fire, and burned it all.

¹ But really I-am-John had eaten it.

² Powdered redwood is used as a medicine, and I-am-John pretended he was getting it for his father in child-birth.

4. THE THREE ILÂMBES.

(Batanga.)

Three people named Ilâmbe went to get magic "medicine" at the town of Njambu-ya-Mabenga; of these, two were men, and one a woman. They happened on their way to see a squirrel lying on a branch of a tree, which, when it saw them, went back into a hollow in the tree.

The eldest Ilâmbe picked up a fruit and threw it so accurately that it closed the mouth of the hole so tightly that he no longer could even see where the hole was. Then Ilâmbe the second struck the palm of his hand on the tree, and the tree at once fell down on the ground flat with a crash. He dug in the hollow, and caught the squirrel; and he said, "This digging is the digging of Ilâmbe the second."¹ And they went on their way, following the path.

After a while the woman said, "Let us rest!" So they sat down together. She pulled out a *jomba* from her basket, in searching for other food she had prepared, and found it was the squirrel already cooked. This had been done by some magic power.

So they said, "What other medicine do we need to go for at the town of Njambu-ya-Mabenga?"

So they went back to their own town.

5. KNOWLEDGE, STRENGTH, SKILL — WHICH IS THE GREATEST?²

(Batanga.)

There was a great queen, known in her own kingdom and in all other kingdoms for her wisdom, kindness, and justice. Her own kingdom had prospered greatly under her long reign. Wherever her trade had gone to other nations, they also had become rich; and wherever even her armies had gone, they always conquered, and in conquering brought freedom and happiness by her good and just laws.

In another country far away lived three men, noted, — the one for his knowledge, the second for his strength, and the third for his skill. The first one was a student. He studied all books; he thought out many things that are not written in books; he could read the signs of the winds and of the stars; he could hear and see where others did not; he knew what was happening in places far off. The second was a worker. He had strength to do all kinds of hard work; he could make any thing that was to be fashioned by power of hands; he made all needed tools, and built great canoes. No one could work so long or so hard with axe, or oar, or paddle, as he. The third was a doctor.

¹ He said this, praising himself for his successful capture of the squirrel.

² See Reinhold Köhler, *Kleinere Schriften*, vol. i, pp. 298, 389. — ED.

He had skill to find out the properties of all herbs and trees; and he knew all the symptoms of disease, and just what medicines to apply in any case. No one died who could obtain his aid in sickness.

One day the wise man, by his knowledge of what was occurring elsewhere, brought the news that the great queen was very sick, that her own doctors were not able to cure her, that her people were seeking for new skill or new medicine, and that, if these were not obtained, she would die. He said he was sorry for her, and wished she might get well. And when he had told this news, he sat down. He did nothing more, and had nothing more to say. Then the doctor stood up and said, "Surely I am the one who is needed there at the sickness of the great queen. Though all those other doctors have failed, I am sure I should not, with my great skill. What a pity that I am not there! She would be sure to live if I were there to discover her disease and to choose the necessary medicine." And he sat down, and said no more; nor did he do any thing else. Then the strong worker stood up and said, "I am not only sorry for the great queen, but I am willing to try to do something for her. I have here my great canoe that only I with all my strength was able to make, and no one but myself is able to paddle it. I am willing to take this doctor to the queen's country, and let us see whether he can save her life." Then all the assemblage said his plan was good, and that it should be carried out. So the doctor took his medicines and got into the canoe, and the strong man paddled him safely over the big waves, and quickly brought him to the town of the great queen. Her people were glad when they heard that a great doctor had come.

He soon found out the disease, and then he quickly cured it. The queen recovered, and she paid him a large fee. Her people rejoiced in her recovery, and they praised the doctor's skill. Then the doctor got into the canoe again, and the strong man rowed him safely back to their country. There the doctor began to show the wealth he had received and to boast of his skill, that had been greater than that of all the queen's doctors. But the strong man — who had received nothing, and whose kindness had made him offer to use his strength to carry the doctor in his canoe — began to murmur, "Of what use would have been all your skill, if I had not had the strength to convey you to that country? But for me, you would have been sitting down here with your skill lying idle, and the queen would have died. I am the one who has saved her." But the wise man interrupted them both, and said, "Of what use would have been your skill and your strength, if I had not informed you of the necessity for their use? You both were in ignorance of the fact of the queen's sickness, and would have remained in ignorance but for me; and she would have died had I not brought you the news of her need of you. I am the one to be thanked

for her life." And each one argued over again. The worker and the doctor together said to the wise man, "Your news of itself was of no use. Without us, it would only have made people unhappy at their helplessness to relieve." Then the wise man and the doctor together had their argument against the worker, of the uselessness of mere strength, if it have nothing valuable for which to exercise itself. So all three kept on arguing, — two against one, and two against one, — and they never were able to decide which was the greater, — knowledge, or strength, or skill.

6. AN AFRICAN PROVERB.¹

"Ho timbakeni o makodo."²

(Benga.)

There were two men, friends and neighbors. The one, Ogula, said, "Chum, I am about to go to a far country to travel, and in my going I leave with you this my barrel of *sitânye*.³ Take good care of it for me." His friend Boloba replied, "Yes; but that's nothing to do." The one friend Ogula went, and travelled in the far country. While he was there, it happened that his friend Boloba's wife was to become a mother, and that pregnancy caused a longing for no other vegetable but that very *sitânye*. Next morning she begged her husband for that food, and he was vexed with her for asking him to break his trust. But it was just the same day by day. At last he said, "I say, if it is so, I will lose money; but I will at once take my friend's *sitânye*. When he is about to return, then I will buy other for him." He took the barrel; just as he was opening it, money fell out on the floor. Said he, "So, then! This is the barrel which my friend said was of *sitânye*, this one of money? Well, then, let me take the money, and return him *sitânye*; for he named *sitânye*."

When the space of ten years had passed, then his friend Ogula arrived. And this man Ogula said to the friend Boloba, "Hand me my barrel which I left with you." His friend Boloba handed over to him promptly a barrel of *sitânye*. When Ogula opened it, he found a barrel full of *sitânye*, fresh and undecomposed. Then he wondered, saying, "I left with my friend Boloba a barrel of money, and he gives me back a barrel of *sitânye*?" Then Ogula called his friend, saying,

¹ Richard F. Burton, Supplemental Nights to the Book of One Thousand Nights and a Night, Ali Khwajah and the Merchant of Baghdad, vol. iv, pp. 405 *et seq.* See also *Ibid.*, p. 597; Theodor Benfey, Panchatantra, vol. i, p. 283, ii, p. 120; C. H. Tawney, Kathâ Sarit Sâgara, vol. ii, pp. 41, 635.

² "Let us go back to the-place-that-was-left." *Makodo* literally means "the deserted site of a village."

³ The food they ate in that land.

"My friend, what are you doing to me? I am the person who left with you a barrel of money, and do you return me a barrel of *sitânye*?" His friend Boloba replied, "That isn't so; you left me *sitânye*, and I return you also *sitânye*. O chum! you are trying to steal money from me!"

The other one, Ogula, said, "You are the one who is trying to steal from me my money. But since you say so, come and enter complaint before the old men." Said the other one, Boloba, "Good thing! Let us go and enter complaint." They went off until they came to the old men. The first friend, Ogula, standing with his statement, said, "It happened, when I decided on a journey to that far country, that then I left with my friend my barrel of money, that he should take care of it for me. And I pretended to him that it was *sitânye*, lest he, knowing it was money, perhaps would open it." His friend Boloba stated, "My friend left with me a barrel of *sitânye*. When he arrived, then I returned him also a barrel of *sitânye*; and here he comes sneaking along, saying that it was of money. And I say that I did not see money." The old men said, "So, that is the matter!—You, Ogula, the party of the first part, you are in error: you left with Boloba, the other party, *sitânye*, and he returns you also *sitânye*. Now, why do you wish to steal from him money?"

When Ogula heard that, he in wrath abandoned the affair, saying, "Let it be! The money was my very own: even if it be lost, I don't care!" Their two children playing in the street, the child of him who owned the money (Ogula) said to the other, "Chum, really! Your father, what is he doing with my father's moneys? My father left with your father a barrel of moneys, and your father is wishing to steal them with out-and-out theft." The other one, the child of Boloba, said, "It's not so: it is your father who is attempting to steal my father's moneys; because your father left with my father *sitânye*, and now does he want to take from him moneys?" Said the other, the child of Ogula, "Chum, since you were born, have you ever seen *sitânye* existing for ten years and not rotting?" The other answered, "No." The other one, the child of Ogula, added, "*Sitânye*, had my father left it, in these ten years, would it not decay and rot?"

Day by day they kept up that discussion. When the old men heard of it, then they said, "Ho timbakeni o makodo" ("Let us go back to the beginning").

When they returned the case for re-trial, they said, "It is so. You, this one, Ogula, you did not leave *sitânye*. You left money; for *sitânye* is unable to lie for ten years without spoiling. You left money. Take your money!" And he took his money.

7. GHOSTS AT A FUNERAL.

(Benga.)

In a certain town, people were standing up in the street, according to custom, speaking in succession at a wailing for the dead. A young child in the crowd rose from his seat and went to the boat-landing at the river-side. Looking across to the other side, he saw a company of beings¹ crossing the river. The child did not know who they were, and at once turned aside and hid behind the trunk of a tree, to watch what they would do. When those beings had finished crossing, the leader of their company took a funnel from his travelling-bag, and he dropped from it, into the eyes of all the people of his company, a fluid, in order to make them invisible, saying, as he laid the funnel down, "A spirit can see a human being; but a human being cannot see a spirit."

When they all had had the fluid dropped into their eyes, they went on to the town. The child stepped out from the place where he was hidden, and picked up the funnel from the place where it had been laid. He dropped from it the fluid into his eyes and mouth and nostrils. Then he went back to the town, and sat on the veranda of a house, and saw all those beings sitting down in a place by themselves. However, none of the people of the town could see them, only that child, because he also had dropped the funnel-liquid into his eyes.

The leader of the spirit-company presently stood up in the street and began to talk to the townspeople, making of them an inquiry. But the people, not hearing or seeing the spirits, did not reply. So that child stood up and began to reply.

The wife of that leader said, "This child is seeing us." The spirit said, "No!" but presently he added, "Eh, stop first! I must see about it." So he took a pipe, and went to offer to give it to one of the townsmen; but that person did not take it. So the leader said, "They do not see us." But the woman still said, "Yes, truly, this child does see us!" So the leader said, "Just wait!" He picked up the pipe, and handed it to the child; and the child took it. To test the child further, the leader said, "Give me back my pipe!" The child handed it to him, and he took it. Then they, seeing that they were discovered, turned and went away. Those beings were spirits.

8. OVER-SLEEPING AND OVER-EATING — WHICH IS WORSE?

(Batanga.)

Viyâ-vibe (Over-Sleeping) and Ejedi-ebe (Over-Eating) contracted a friendship. Over-Eating went to visit at the town of Over-Sleeping.

¹ Re-embodied spirits of dead relatives of the deceased, for whom the wailing was being made, were coming to join in the ceremony.

The latter prepared all kinds of food, filling the whole house full. Over-Eating entered straight into the house, and greedily swallowed all the things that were in the house; then he went out. As he was departing, he spoke to his friend Over-Sleeping, saying, "Now I'm going to my home; you must come and visit me in two days."

When the two days were up, this person, Over-Sleeping, arose, and, going on his way, arrived at the town of his friend Over-Eating. At once the latter went hunting in the forest to provide food for his guest, who remained in the town; and there he fell asleep. His head was laid down here, and his body there, and the limbs of the body stretched out full length on the ground. When Over-Eating returned from the forest, he found his friend all spread out on the ground, as if he were dead, and sleeping so soundly as to be unconscious. Thinking his friend had been killed, Over-Eating flew into a passion, saying, "Who are they who have killed a visitor in my town?" So he rose up and went to kill people of another family, in order to avenge his friend's death.¹

On his return, he found his friend Over-Sleeping awakened from his sleep and sitting up. Then people came, and said to Over-Eating, "What have you been killing people for?" So they called a council, and talked the matter over, bringing accusation against Over-Eating. But he said, "It is not I who am to be accused: *Viyâ-vibe* should be accused."²

But the elders in the council decided that Over-Eating was the guilty one.

9. TWO PEOPLE WITH ONLY ONE EYE.

(*Batanga.*)

There were two people, a man and a woman. The one was blind; so was the other. They possessed one eye. If one of them without the eye wished to see a thing, he could do so only by first saying to the other, "Give me the eye!"

One time the man went into the forest, carrying the eye with him, and he saw a honey-tree; then he went back. When he arrived at his house, he told the woman, "I have found honey in a tree; we must go to-morrow to dig at it and pull it out of the hollow of the tree." So the next day the man, wearing the eye, carried the woman on his back; and they went and arrived at the foot of the tree. There he put down the woman, and took up his axe and machete. He climbed the tree,

¹ According to the custom of killing the first person the avenger may meet, however innocent, in order to embroil all parties, and compel a combination against the unknown guilty one.

² Because Over-Sleeping's deep sleep had made Over-Eating think him dead, and had caused the latter to go on the raid.

and chopped and cut, and he dug into the hollow, and he pulled out the honeycomb. Then he spoke, and called to the woman, saying, "You must weave a basket into which to put the honeycomb." His wife replied to him, "How shall I see, when I have no eye? Without the eye, how can I see to weave? Fling me the eye!"

So the man pulled the eye out of his socket, and flung it into her lap, below on the ground. The woman promptly caught the eye, and properly fastened it tight into her own socket. She began to cut sticks and twigs, and then wove the frame of a basket.

When she had finished the weaving of it, the man spoke to her, saying, "Fling me the eye!" So she skilfully gave the eye a fling, and threw it up to him into his opened hands; and he caught it, and put it in its place in his socket.

After a while, the woman spoke, saying, "Send me some honey; I wish to eat." But the man replied, "Just wait! You will eat to-day when I arrive." But the woman said, "I want to eat now." So the man threw to her a piece of the honeycomb. But she did not hear it fall, and did not know where it was; and she said, "Send me the eye, that I may pick up the comb." Upon that the man flung the eye again into her lap. The woman took it up, and put it into her own socket; she found where the comb had fallen, and began to eat the honey.

Then the man said to her, "Fling me the eye again up here!" The woman flung the eye toward him; but it lodged on a branch, and stuck fast in a crotch. Just then a bird came. The man, still waiting, and not knowing that the eye had been thrown, ordered again, saying, "Fling me the eye!" She replied, "The eye is up there." But the man answered, "No, I haven't it." And the woman responded, "You are deceiving me."

Just then that bird swallowed the eye and flew away. The man was changed, and became a nest of house-ants; and the woman also was changed, and became a white ant-hill.

10. A PLAY AT HIDE-AND-SEEK.

Mwan'-ukuku¹ and Mwana-moto² were friends and playmates. Mwana-moto spoke to his mate, saying, "Come, let us make a play at hide-and-see!" And they did so.

So Mwana-moto began to hide; and Mwan'-ukuku sought, and soon saw him. Then Mwan'-ukuku took his turn at hiding. Mwana-moto sought and sought, in vain, and did not find him. Thereupon, Mwan'-ukuku spoke, and said, "A human being and a ghost; can they play at hide-and-see? For you, you cannot see a ghost."

¹ Child of a spirit; that is, a ghost.

² Child of man; that is, person.

As a friend and playmate of the human child, the child-of-spirits embodied itself when it chose to; but in this play it disembodied itself, and was invisible.

II. PISTOL, THE FIGHTING-GUN.

(Benga.)

Pistols were formerly called by West Africans "*putu*,"¹ because native people of old times first saw them in the hands of Portuguese traders.

There was a certain bold man who was noted for his great assumptions. He respected no one, for there was no one whom he feared. One day he happened to meet a neighbor's child on the street, and he teased him. The child protested and resisted, then the man beat him. But this child happened to have a *putu*, and, young as he was, he bravely did not hesitate, but instantly cocked it, and snapped the trigger at the other. And that big fellow was stretched on the ground dead. His people said in revenge, "Since this young one has killed this man, let us seize both him and his father, and let us go and cut their throats." But the council of old men said, "Not so! It is not this child who has killed that man. It is Fight that killed him. He made fight; and Fight has killed him." Then it was that they changed the name of the pistol, and called the *putu* "*eduka-njali*" ("fight-gun"); and that is its common name to this day.

12. THE THREE STATEMENTS.

A man sent off his three children, saying, "Go, and dig out for me from its nest the woodpecker (*ebokikâkâ*), that bird that pierces holes in trees, and makes its sleeping-place there." So the children went to dig in the hollow tree, and presently they caught the male woodpecker. On consultation, they said, "We will not give it to our father; let us go and eat it ourselves." So they went back to their town with it secretly.

After a while, when their father saw them, he suspected something wrong; and, meeting the eldest alone, he said to him, "You, the eldest, tell what was done with that bird." The child replied, "There was none." After a while the father met the second child, and questioned him, saying, "What was done with the bird?" The child said, "It was all bloody, and not fit to bring to you." Afterward the father saw the third child, and asked him, "What was done with the bird?" The child replied, "It was only young and unfledged." So the father said to them, "Give up the bird to me!" for they had made three different statements, and for that reason the father knew they were lying.

¹ "*Putu*" was the native attempt to pronounce the word "Portugal."

13. FIRE AND WATER — WHICH HAS GREATER POWER?

Veya ("Fire") and Miba ("Water") were neighbors in a town. Fire said to Water, "I am the one who can surpass you in power. Without me, you could not cook food; without me, people could not survive."

Then Water spoke, saying, "No, it is I who have greater power. Without me, what would people drink?"

These two persons kept on arguing about their power. Wherever they met, this one repeated the same arguments as before, and that one the same as before. So people became wearied with their discussions, and went into a council to settle this matter. When they adjourned from the council, they said to the two disputants, "You two are each of sufficient power." Therefore it was settled, that, as neither one was able to surpass the other, neither was greater: they were of equal power, and therefore were to cease their dispute.

14. THREE BROTHERS; OR, SETTLE FAMILY QUARRELS AT HOME.

Njambe begat three sons of one mother. He called them, when they were grown to be young men, saying, "Come ye, perhaps death is approaching, choose ye the woman whom ye want" (out of his number of wives, as part of their inheritance).

Then the eldest son, Kombe, stood up, saying, "I have no woman here who is fit for me to marry." And another son, Ugângila, stood up, saying the same words as the older one. Thereupon the other, Ugula, stood up with the same words as the others.

Then they went to their mother, saying, "Prepare us food for a journey." She prepared it for them; and they started on their journey to engage in marriages.

When they came to the middle of their way, there was a steep ascent of a hill, with a steep descent, and another steep ascent beyond, and they did not see any path. So said Kombe, "I am the eldest; I must be the first to pass on. Look at me; if I see the way, I will return to call you. You also, if you see it, then you may return to call me." So Kombe went; but, as he did not see the road, he returned to where they were. They spoke to him, saying, "Come, we have seen the way."

Then they went on and on, and found a very large, deep pit. Kombe spoke, saying, "I am the eldest; let me go first." So he descended by a rope into the pit rapidly (*pololo*). But at the middle of the descent he found things which bit and stung; and these things covered his whole body. So he shook the rope as a signal; and his two brothers at once drew him up, and he stood at the top.

Then Ugângila said, "I also must go." So they tied him with the

rope, and he went down. When he had gone halfway down, those things met him. He in pain shook the rope; and his brothers drew it and he came up.

Then Ugula spoke, saying, "I must go also." He went down to the very end, very rapidly, passing the stinging things safely. He saw and entered first a wide, open place, finding there a fine house, and three young women inside with their mother. The mother asked him, "What have you come to do?" He answered, "I come seeking marriage for my brothers; we are three, children of one mother. Therefore I want for the marriage these three daughters of thine." The mother said, "Yes, young man that you are, I am willing; but the father of these girls has killed many people on account of them, and he is in the room upstairs." Ugula fearlessly said, "Go tell him I am here." The woman went to tell her husband. When she went to tell him, she did not know who Ugula was: she had deceived him by her prompt consent to him. She suspected he was a man who had once attempted to steal her daughters. So she made up a story, saying to her husband, "I had left my paddle at the beach, and, when I came back, the man who stole your daughters came to the house." The father said he was willing to see him, and told her, "Let him come here. He must come to-morrow, in the morning, at eight o'clock." So the woman told Ugula to wait, and that he should go to the father next day.

When the day broke, Ugula dressed himself carefully, and went up to the room of his prospective father-in-law, and he told him the whole affair. The father was willing, and said, "It is well; I am pleased."

Then Ugula arranged with the young women. He spoke to one of them, Ivenga, saying, "My eldest brother is to be your husband;" and to another daughter, Eyâle, "You are the wife of myself, Ugula;" and to the third daughter, Ekomba, "You are to be the wife of Ugângila." Then, by the rope, he sent up Ivenga, and next he sent Ekomba, and finally he sent Eyâle. And then his brothers cut the rope; and Ugula was left behind, without a way of escape. He remained in seclusion in the extensive palace apartments, thinking what he should do. Some days after that, his father-in-law called him, saying, "Since you took from me my daughters to-day makes four days. What have you done with my children?" Ugula replied, "I have done nothing to them; but my brothers have done wrong against me." And he explained what had happened. Then the father was ready to help him, saying, "Put thy hand under the bed and take thence a small box." Ugula took it and handed it to him; but the father gave it back to him, saying, "This little Ngalo will tell you every thing that you should do. Now stand on my head." So he stood on his father-in-law's head, and in the twinkling of an eye he

found himself at the top of the ground (but away from where he had left his brothers), and standing in a kitchen-garden at the rear of the house of a town. Not knowing where he was, or whether his brothers were anywhere near, and fearing lest they should kill him if they saw him, by the power of the Ngalo he transformed himself, making all his body full of sores, to disguise himself. Presently, when a woman, the owner of the house, came there behind the house to cut leaves in the garden, and saw him, she called to her husband, saying, "I have picked up a man! He must be my slave."¹

Then the people of the town said to her, "To-morrow there shall be an assemblage of the whole tribe."²

When the next day broke, Ugula spoke to the people, saying, "I want to go now." They said, "No, remain here!"³ And he remained. They, thinking the matter was settled, went away on a far journey; and, as they went on ahead, there he was, standing, having come there by the power of the Ngalo. They spoke to him, saying, "We had left you in the town." He replied to them, "Just wait. See what happens." Then he said to the Ngalo, "Two good suits of clothing!" And they appeared in abundance. That woman who had captured him was wondering at him and his Ngalo; and her husband said to her, "See! we had left this person in the town, but now we come and meet him on the way before us!" So they went away without trying to claim him as their slave.

After a long time he built a house by that path. He spoke to the Ngalo, saying, "Since I brought you from that town, you have not showed me any work, nor any thing I shall do. I want you to renew my body and make it healthy as I was born, also give me a suit of clothing that will cause me to be invisible to all people."

So Ngalo returned all his sores inside, leaving his body clean. And it brought forward to him a fine horse, and he rode upon it. Then he passed on in his journey, and he came to the street of a town, and he went to where the King Nkombe-nyambe was. He spoke to the king, saying, "I have a tale to tell. I want you to summon for me here to trial Kombe and Ugângila, and Ivenga and Ekomba and Eyâle, and my father Njambe and his wife." The king did so; and all the parties came, except Ugula's father and mother.

Then Ugula made his statement to Nkombe-nyambe, saying, "We were born of the same mother, three brothers, — Kombe and Ugângila and Ugula. Then our father called us, and said, 'I am going to die; but choose ye now your wives.' We replied to him, saying, 'We do not wish these thy wives, but only women who are daughters

¹ According to the custom of enslaving wandering strangers.

² To discuss the status of the stranger.

³ As a slave.

of one mother.' So we journeyed to seek them in marriage. When we went on our way, we arrived at a deep pit; and Kombe said, 'I must go first.' Then he went, and he returned. Then went Ugângila, and he returned. When they finished, then I went down; and I met these young women with their mother. The mother spoke to me, saying, 'What have you come to do?' I answered her, saying, 'We were born three brothers: therefore we come to be married with these thy three daughters.' And she consented. Then she went out and told it to her husband. When I sent the women up to the top of the ground, my brothers cut the rope, and I was left down in the hollow. They have married those whom I sent up to them. Now the time of your court is arrived; therefore I bring up this case before you."

Thereupon, Nkombe-nyambe spoke, saying, "The affair is too great for me to judge. Go, return home; and your father himself must settle the dispute between you." The king also remarked, "Actually to be of one and the same mother, is it any thing? Even if you and another are children of the same mother, each should have his own heart, and do his own mind."

So Ugula took his horse and his wife Eyâle, and returned and came to their town.¹

15. A GREAT FRIENDSHIP.

Maseni ("Merchant") lived at the seacoast. Ugělě ("Poverty") a man, and his wife Ugělě (they two having the same name), lived in the interior. Kombe ("Sun") also lived in the interior, still farther away in the forest.

Maseni begat a man-child, whose fine qualities were without limit. His name was Pinda-'lema ("Darkness-of-Heart"). Maseni said to him, "I give the tribe a law under my seal and under pain of death, that, if any one shall see a child or any person as fine as Pinda-'lema, he must come out and tell me."

Ugělě the man, and his wife Ugělě, also begat a man-child, whose name was Atome ("He-is-there"). When he was born, he had on his arm an ivory wristlet.

Kombe begat a female child, by name Unyongo ("Rainbow").

These children, strangers to one another, all grew up. One day Atome said, "I am going to the seaside, to travel and to see the sea." So he went, and emerged at a coast that is like that of the Batanga creek Jambwe. He went on his journey, and, looking thence, he saw the beach full of little children digging in the sand. We know how that part of the beach is in the season of the *mbangala* ("very small clams"). Atome had with him on his journey two birds, one

¹ See Franz Boas, "Notes on Mexican Folk-Lore" (this Journal, vol. xxv, pp. 254-258); also Aurelio M. Espinosa (*Ibid.*, vol. xxvii, p. 219, where literature is given). See also Frank Russell, Athabascan Myths (*Ibid.*, vol. xiii, p. 11).

on each shoulder. The people who were on the beach, seeing him, came to meet him. They said among themselves, "We have never seen such a fine person as this since we were born." They went back quickly to their town, according to Maseni's law, to tell him.

Pinda-'lema started quickly to meet Atome. When he met him, Atome presented him with those birds. Pinda-'lema said to him, "Come to the town." When he arrived there, the tribe said, "He is to die."¹ But Pinda-'lema said, "Not so! He is my friend." He caused him to enter a house, and had food made for him; and they ate.

Atome passed some time visiting there; and then Pinda-'lema said to him, "Let us go; you escort me on my marriage-errand." Atome said, "Yes, a good affair!" And they went on their journey to Kombe's town. Before that, Kombe had announced, "The person who comes to marry my child must first fast for eight days; then he may marry."

They emerged from the forest at the town of Atome's parents, Ugělě and Ugělě, — and then passed it by, on to other towns. The relative positions of the two young men were misunderstood, so that, as they came to any town, the inquiry was raised by the townspeople, "Atome and his steward, where are they going?" Atome would reply, "For a marriage." So that people still further misunderstood, and thought it was Atome who was seeking marriage. Before that, many men had gone that way, seeking to marry Unyongo, only to return, saying, "Who is able to endure hunger eight days, without eating?"

As they came to another town, the same inquiry was raised, "Atome and his steward, where are they going?" He replied, as before, "To a marriage." At all the towns they came to, they were met just so, and the questions and answers were just the same.

At last they arrived at the town of Kombe. They entered and sat down.

Unyongo was in her upper room. The townspeople came and saluted the visitors, "Mbolani!" — "Ai!" they replied. They were asked, "You are come on your journey for what purpose?" They replied, "For a marriage." Kombe said, "I have no objection. Which of you is for the marriage?" They both said "Pinda-'lema," thus leaving the impression, as Atome had been the chief speaker, that *he* was the leader.

Unyongo, peeping from her window, saluted them, and, being also under mistake as to their persons, said to herself, "It is well that it is not Atome." Kombe said to Pinda-'lema, "You do not have to pay any dowry goods, only the test of eight days of hunger."

The evening then darkened to night. Pinda-'lema went to Unyongo's room. Did she think him Atome's steward? He and she

¹ The custom, in cannibal days, of eating strangers.

enjoyed themselves, and talked in conversation. He asked her, "Do you love me?" She answered, "Yes, I love." All that night passed, and daylight came. He had nothing to eat that whole day. Next night, at midnight, his friend Atome took good food up to the room, handed him the food, and went out. But Unyongo did not know that Atome was bringing food. Unyongo and the man enjoyed themselves and gave each other tender words of love. She said to him, "Are we to marry?" The man said, "I do not know whether we can marry." He was uncertain whether he could stand that test of hunger.

Atome still kept on bringing food. Another day opened; and Kombe began to suspect, from Pinda-'lema's vivacity, that he was not fasting. So he said to Unyongo, "What! are you giving him food?" She replied, "Father, I do not give him food, for I do not like him." It was true that she did not give him food; but she deceived her father in saying she did not like him. Kombe, not satisfied with her denial, told her in the evening, "You don't lie any more on the side of the bed where you have been lying. You must lie on the outside; and he must take the wall-side."

At night she did so. They fondled each other, and then went to sleep. In the middle of the night, when Atome came and spread out the food, he touched the head of Unyongo, supposing it to be Pinda-'lema, not knowing of Kombe's having changed their positions. Unyongo, being frightened, screamed, "O my father! Oh, who is this?" Atome took away his body, hiding sufficiently behind the post in the doorway.

Kombe and the townspeople came. Lamps were thoroughly carried around the room. They found the good food, and the table all ready. They sought for the person who brought the food, but did not see him. Kombe said, "Put the food in that drawer there." The drawer had a very difficult lock. Then they all went out.

Atome also went out that night, and he made other keys that same night at the blacksmith's bellows. When he had finished, he went up into the room. He tried one key, but it did not fit. He selected another; it clicked and the drawer opened. He took away the food that was there, and put in other pieces of fresh cassava-bread, locked the drawer, and went away. When the day broke, and people went up into the room and opened the drawer, the food they had seen at night was not there!

Kombe said, "I do not know about this matter;" and he began to call an assemblage of the people. Atome went out and changed his body by magic power, humbling himself as if he was a despicable fellow, all his body being covered with eruptions, and disease on his head, so that the townspeople would not recognize him, and would think him a visitor just arrived. He came and sat down amongst them.

Kombe began the investigation by asking, "Who has done this thing?" At once Atome replied, "I." Kombe, in surprise, "You?" Atome, "No." Again Kombe, "You?" Atome, "Yes." Again Kombe, "You?" Atome, "No." Then Atome spoke, "But now, you all assembled here, if I tell you the truth, will you grant my request?" They said, "Yes." Then he said, "Well, I beg Kombe and you all that you will allow Pinda-'lema to go away with his wife." They said, "Yes, we are willing." So they gave up the woman to Pinda-'lema.

The young men started on their journey with their woman, to go back to the seacoast, to the town of Maseni, the father of Pinda-'lema. They arrived finally at that town; and the townspeople gave them a thorough welcome.

Later on in his stay, Atome said to Pinda-'lema, "Chum, I want one of your father's wives." Pinda-'lema said, "Good!" and he went to tell that wife of his father. At first she did not consent. But presently she said, as a sign, "If I see a lime coming into the upper room, I will consent." Afterwards, while they two were still sitting together, a lime-fruit came, thrown through the window by Unyongo, who was in the plot. The woman picked it up and put it into a basin. And Pinda-'lema went and told Atome, "Chum, she consents." Then the day darkened, and at night Atome started to go to the room of the woman. He stretched out his hand to feel her shoulders, and in so doing, he touched the head of Maseni, not knowing that Maseni was there. Maseni laid tight hold of his hand, saying, "Who is it?" Atome scuffled, and Maseni scuffled. Maseni shouted, "Ho, men! ho!" People came in the dark, and laid hold of Atome; but he slipped away from them to the house of his friend, Pinda-'lema, and sat down.

When Maseni and the others followed, and demanded that Atome be killed at once, Pinda-'lema, to create delay and to give Atome a chance to escape, said, "My father, you may kill him to-morrow." The people said, "Yes, wait till daylight."

When daylight came, the tribe was called together in assemblage, and Maseni said, "Produce him!" His son said, "Let him first have his cup of tea." When Atome had finished drinking it, Pinda-'lema said, "Let him also eat." When the food was finished, Pinda-'lema said, "My father, what do you say about it?" He replied, "Atome shall surely die." Pinda-'lema said, "My father, my friend saved me from starvation, and I will save him too." His father said, "Not so, unless with a fight."

That previous night, after the people had returned to their beds, Atome, going out of Pinda-'lema's house, had by magic power put an iron fence all around the town, so that, if there was to be a fight, all should perish together, and none escape; and also, that same night, Pinda-

'lema had gone, with his magic silver sword in hand, off into the forest. There he had found a leopardess with newly-born kits. He had taken four of the little kits. The mother had followed him; but he had put the little leopards in a small iron enclosure of his father; and the leopard went back to her lair.

Pinda-'lema then began his address to his father. He said, "Now, then, my father! I caught young leopards last night, finding a leopardess with them newly born." The people interrupted, "Not so. Who can take a leopard's young just when she has borne them?" He answered, "Well, then, go to the enclosure and see." They went and found them, and acknowledged, "Yes, it's so."

Then Pinda-'lema resumed, "Men, now hear, for you have seen I speak the truth. This is the cause of this affair" (and he made up the following story): "I and my friend had a discussion. I told him that my father never slept. And he said, 'That is not true. Is there a person ever born who does not sleep?' And I said, 'If you go, you will find him awake.' So it was that he found my father awake; and he pressed his hand on my father's face, and my father seized him by the hand. And he and my father tusselled for that hand. My friend pulled away his hand, and the ivory ring which was on his wrist was left with my father. So, as I had told him, — 'If you do not find my father asleep, I will then catch a leopard's cubs,' — I went and caught the cubs of the leopard. Look at them! So it was only our discussion, not that he went to seek your wife."

The tribe were silent with amazement; and they said, "Eh! is it possible it was only a discussion!"

And they spoke to Pinda-'lema, saying, "Then you, what do you say should be done?" He replied, "I say that my father should give Atome the woman," in reparation for the false (*sic*) accusation.

But Maseni said, "I cannot do it." Then the two young men set the end of the father's town on fire, and his wives and children were in danger of being burned up. But Atome dipped his finger into water, sprinkled it on the conflagration, and the fire was extinguished.

So all the people said, "Let him take the woman" as a reward for putting out the fire. So Maseni gave them that wife.

Then they left Maseni and his town; and Pinda-'lema and his friend, and Pinda-'lema's mother, and their two wives, went to build their own village.

This tale shows the great love of friendship. It overcame even the obligations of blood-relationship, and stood even that test.

16. TWO BROTHERS AND THEIR ENMITY.

The men of a certain town went to sea to catch fish. Two of them were near relatives, — half-brothers, children of the same father. One

of them, the elder, caught a large, strange fish. The other, the younger, said, "This fish that you have caught, of what kind is it?" The rest of the fishermen came around in their canoes to examine, and they also asked, "What kind of a fish is this?" But none knew: so they called it Ngunu-Upâyâ.

As the younger brother lifted it up to examine it closely, it slipped from his fingers back into the sea. Then the older one demanded, "As you have lost it for me, follow it to the place whither it has gone, and get it." The younger replied, "Brother, let me alone: excuse me for its loss; for, even if I go to seek it, I do not know where it has gone." But the elder said, "I will not forgive you."

They returned ashore to their town, and continued their quarrel there. The elder persisted in saying, "I will never forgive you till you have followed where that fish has gone." So the younger, wearied with the quarrel, said to his mother, "Mother, make me food for a journey: I'm going to seek where that fish has gone." His mother and father both agreed to this mode of settling the quarrel, and said, "Go and seek it, for your brother is tired of you. Go and seek where it is." His mother went to escort him along the beach. At a certain point he plunged into the sea, and by magic power walked along the bottom. On the way he met many fishes, and to each he offered some of his food. They ate of it, thanked him, and said, "Go on your way in peace." As he went on, he came to a small house. An old woman was sitting there alone. Her body was covered with disease, and the house was filthy with dirt. He entered, and saluted her; and she said to him, "I see that you are a handsome man; but why do you come into such a house as this, that is not fit for you?" He only replied by taking up a scoop and bailing out the dirty water. Then he went to a spring and brought good water, and with it he washed her whole body, and lifted her up from the ground, laid her on the bed, and made a fire near the bedstead. Then he said to her, "Old woman, eat. I have brought you food; eat." And he went out of the house, respectfully leaving her alone while she was eating.

While he was out, the woman by magic power changed her body to the appearance of a young woman. She arose from the bed, sat at the table, and called the young man. He came in, and they ate together. After they had finished the food, the woman asked, "The journey that brought you hither, what was the reason of it?" So he told her, "My brother caught a fish, and it slipped from my hands. He was angry with me, and ordered me to find the fish." Then the woman replied, "You are seeking a fish? Go on your way. At the next town enter, and there you must make a pretence to the townspeople by saying, 'Who has killed my uncle? I have come to seek the fish which my uncle has left as inheritance.'"

He went on his way, came to that place, did as the woman had told him; and they gave him that very fish that was lost.

Then he came back to the house of the woman, bringing the fish with him. She prepared food, and they ate together. Then the man said, "Come, escort me on my way." She refused, and remained in the house; but she gave him a stick of sugarcane, and told him to go and plant it on the shore. He resumed his journey, and came back to land, to the town of his people. His father and mother welcomed him with, "Iyě, iyě!" saying, "We did not know that you would ever come back." He took up the fish, and asked his brother, who was sitting there, "Where is my brother? There's your fish!" But the elder brother did not thank him, only saying, "Good! very good that I have obtained my fish."

The younger one took the sugarcane, and planted it near the door leading to the kitchen-garden. Many years passed, and the cane grew. One day the elder brother, feeling hungry, cut the stalk of cane and ate it. The younger one was out in the forest at the time. When he returned, and saw that the cane was cut, he said, "Who has cut my cane?" His father told him, "Your brother did it."

Then the younger son said to his brother, "The place where I found that cane, there you will go and find one like it for me!" All the townspeople interfered, saying, "Let your brother alone! Where will he find the cane?" But the younger said, "Where I sought his fish, there he may seek my cane."

The quarrel continued day by day, and finally the elder, being wearied, said, "Mother, give me food for a journey, and I will go." He went away with the food, and entered the sea on the path on which his brother had gone; but he went recklessly, in ill will, and trusting to himself and his own power. He travelled, and he came to the house of the old woman. He found the house dirty, as it was before, and the woman diseased, as she had been; and he did not go in.

She looked at him, and said, "This is no place fit for you to enter." He showed her no sympathy, or desire to help her. Then she said to him warningly, and as a rebuke, "I perceive that you will not succeed on this journey." The man replied, "To enter your dirty house, or to go back? Even if I do not succeed, I prefer to go back." She only said, "Do as your character likes to do." He answered, "What can I do? If I do not find the cane, and I go back, I can but die for it." So he curtly said to the woman, "I'm going." And she ordered him, "Go!"

He started to return to land, but on the way he lost the route, and could find no path that he recognized. And finally he was utterly lost, and was drowned.

17. THE TOUCAN AND THE THREE GOLDEN-GIRDLED CHILDREN.

Njambo had many women. He begot also many children. One day one of these women bore twins, both females.

Long after this, when the twins were grown beautiful young women, the elder went out for a walk on the beach; and, looking off at the sea, she exclaimed, "Would that to-day the agent of some trading-house would come and marry me!" At once a steamer came in sight and anchored, having on board the agent of a trading-firm of merchants, coming to inspect the work of his clerks. Instantly he loved the young woman, and he said to Njambo, "I want to marry your child." Njambo assented, "Yes, but give me very many goods." The agent gave him a large quantity of goods, married the woman, and took her away with him to his own country in Manga-Maněň ("White-Man's Land").

The merchant, head of the firm, subsequently also came, and he married the younger twin. This woman said to him, "I shall bear you three children, — one named Manga ('Sea'), one Joba ('Sun'), and one Ngânde ('Moon')." They agreed, as a promise, that this should be so; and he took her with him to his country of Manga-Maněň, to the same town where the other sister already was. But the mother of the merchant hated this daughter-in-law, so also did the mother-in-law of the elder sister. Moreover, the elder said to herself, "I am the elder; it was more fitting that I should have married the merchant rather than his subordinate, my husband, the agent." So she too hated her sister.

The wife of the merchant became pregnant; and her husband said, "I am going on a journey for amusement of travel."

When the birth-pangs seized his wife, after he was gone, she called her mother-in-law to assist her; also she called her elder sister, the one who married the agent. These two came, and they bandaged her eyes so that she should not see the child when it should be born.

So she bore a child, and she called it Manga. But the other two women took the child, and called for a carpenter. Under their direction, he made a coffin, put the child in it, and threw it into the sea. Then they took a kitten, and said to the mother, "You are false. You have not borne a child of man; you have borne a puss." Then they withdrew the bandage from her eyes. She sat up; and when she saw the cat, she began to cry; and the mother-in-law and the sister returned to their places.

When the merchant returned from his journey, his mother said to him, "Your wife is full of falsehood. She said to you she would bear a man-child, but lo! she bears a cat." He replied only, "Well, she promised me three; there are yet to be born two."

A man who was living a hundred miles away, in casting his seine

one day, drew in a little coffin. When he opened the box and saw a living babe, he exclaimed, "Lo! What a handsome child!"

Some time after this, the wife bore a second child; but before it was to be born, her husband went away on another journey. This he did to test his wife.

At the time of her confinement, the woman again sent word for the two women — her sister and the mother of her husband — to come. Again they bandaged her eyes. And she bore another child, giving it the name Ngânde. The infant, as it was born, gave a little wail like a squeal. The two women called the carpenter, as at first; and they took a little shote, and said to the mother, "This is your second child." And, as before, the carpenter threw the little coffin into the sea.

When the merchant arrived home again, his mother said to him, "Your wife has borne the child of a pig. She is very false." He patiently replied, "Well, there is one more left; and the end will show."

Again the fisherman, a hundred miles distant, found the second coffin, and, opening it, saw a human being in it, and exclaimed, "Oh, how beautiful this person!" And the child was taken ashore, where his elder brother was already grown to be a stout lad.

More years passed, and the woman bore a third child. Her husband had again gone on his journey. And at the time of her confinement, the mother again called for the other two women. They bandaged her eyes, as twice before. When the child was born, it wailed with a voice like a puppy. So they brought her a little dog, telling her it was her child. They again called for the carpenter, and said to him, "Do for this child as you did for the others." So he made the coffin, and threw it with the infant into the sea.

When the merchant came home again, his mother said to him, "During your journey your wife has borne a dog. So false!" Then he said to his wife, "Did you not promise me three children? And yet the children were a dog, a pig, and a cat." So he ordered her to be put in his stable among the cattle, saying, "This woman and the cows shall be in one and the same place."

Again the fisherman who had found the other two coffins found a third. Opening the box, he wondered at the child's beauty. He said to himself, "Who are those who throw these children into the sea?"

Of those children, the first two were males, the third was a female. These three grew up in strength and beauty in the fisherman's house, where he lived all by himself, except that he had a large bird with him, that could talk with human speech.

Finally this fisherman thought, "No! I'll leave these young people here by themselves." And he went away to live at another place, leaving them in the care of the Bird.

A message was sent one day to the town of the merchant by a news-teller whose name was Esëlëngila. He said, "A young woman whom I have seen at a certain place is exceedingly beautiful, more so even than was this one you have placed in the cow-house. And the young men who are building her house are very fine. They are building stones of diamonds in that house. And that house has a bird that is called Utombo ('Toucan')."

The merchant, having his curiosity aroused, decided to go and inspect that place. When he arrived there, he found the three young people all in one place. He was seized with a sudden surprise at their fine dress and signs of wealth, and with admiration for the young woman. He asked the young men that he might marry their sister. They consented, but they all three did so, deceiving him; for they all knew he was their father, the bird Utombo having told them so. They promised the merchant that in three days they would be ready to come to his house. He agreed to this arrangement, and went back to his town.

In three days he sent a steamer to bring them. They put on their very finest clothing, and embarked in the vessel. Soon they arrived at the merchant's town. There he made a great feast for them. And they all ate, except that Utombo ate nothing. When it was inquired why the Bird was not eating, the Bird said, "I want my food to be only a *ukukumba* (a certain forest fruit)." The merchant asked, "What are *mekukumba*?" The two young men answered, "As you have none here, gather stones, cook them in a pot, and he will eat them."

The stones were boiled over the fire; but the cook could not succeed in softening them. So the Bird said, "Well, if you cannot cook the stones, I will use a guest's right, and ask for what I want. Bring that woman who is out in the stable, and I will eat her."

She was sent for, was brought from the cow-house, and was promptly washed and arrayed for the feast. When she arrived, the two young men said to the merchant, "Summon all the employees and people on your premises. We have a word to say to you."

So all the people came together, very many. The three children were sitting together in one place. The woman also, who had put on fine clothes, was sitting with them, together with the Bird.

Those children, when they were born, had golden girdles, from which had come all their wealth.

The Bird spoke, and said, "All you men and people here, is there any among you who can eat a stone, as I can?"

They answered, "No!"

Then the Bird said, "I know of what I speak. This man wants to marry this young woman. But I have an announcement to make to

you. These three children — that man is their father; their mother is this woman. She promised her husband she would bear him three children. Those three are these. And they were born in greatness."

At this the merchant was amazed.

To prove his words, the Bird said, "You three children, remove your clothing to your waists, and show your girdles."

All the audience and the merchant examined, and they saw the gold.

Then the Bird said to the merchant, "Summon your mother, and carpenter, and the woman who married your agent; for they have done this thing."

When they appeared, and were charged with their crime, the carpenter said, "I only made and nailed a box. I have nothing in this matter." The mother-in-law also denied, saying, "I have nothing to do with it. It belongs to the agent's wife."

But the merchant ordered, "Seize these two women, — my mother and this wife of the agent; tie a stone to their necks, and throw them into the sea; for they have lied to me greatly."

So they were tied with a stone to their necks, and were thrown into the sea; and they died.

Then the merchant took his three children and their mother to his house. And he and his wife ended their marriage in peace and happiness.





